DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 272 319 PS 015 970

AUTHOR Clow, Suzanne L.
TITLE The Voucher Project. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Phoenix Inst., Salt Lake City, UT.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Human Development Services (DHHS), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Sep 84
GRANT DHHS-G-90-PD-10050
NOTE 57p.; Media articles appended to this document may not reproduce clearly.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Community Involvement; *Community Services; *Day Care; Early Childhood Education; Educational Finance; *Educational Vouchers; Employer Employee Relationship; *Employer Supported Day Care; *Low Income Groups
IDENTIFIERS Utah (Salt Lake City)

ABSTRACT

This final report details the Phoenix Institute's (Utah) Voucher Project, a project aimed at promoting a voucher-paid child care benefit for low-income employees who would pay for their child care services and then be reimbursed upon presenting vouchers to the employer who would pay the whole or partial cost as part of a worker benefit. Included in the report are the following: (1) an overview of the project's objectives; (2) a schedule of presentations about the project delivered to employers, the child care community, employee groups, and the community at large; (3) an analysis of various factors intrinsic to the project's successful implementation and related recommendations; and (4) a summary of the project's accomplishments. The report concludes with a discussion of child care trends in Utah. Appendices, which make up more than half the document, include a voucher project phase chart, a description of the Junior League-sponsored child care resource and referral system, a description of a legal process for setting up a dependent care assistance plan, a voucher materials packet, and some newspaper articles. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

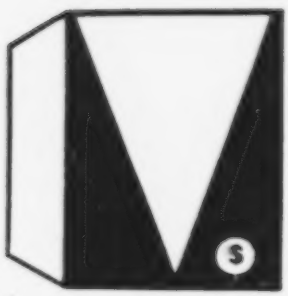
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED272319



The VOUCHER PROJECT

Final Report

PS 015970

A Demonstration Project of
Employer Supported
Child Care

The Voucher Project

Final Report

to

Department of Health and Human Services

Office of Human Development Services

October 1, 1983 - September 30, 1984

Grant No.: 90PD10050

Submitted by
Suzanne L. Clow
Project Director
Region VIII

Phoenix Institute
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 532-6190

I. THE VOUCHER PROJECT

BACKGROUND

Phoenix Institute was founded in 1971 as a non-profit organization specializing in organizational consulting as well as employment and training program development. Ever since its founding, Phoenix Institute has also offered career and personal development services and training for individuals in career and life transitions.

Recently Phoenix has received national recognition as being an innovative career and personal resource center for the western states region. Phoenix attributes this success to offering programs and services that promote clear and assertive communication, unstereotyped career development, and economic advancement among people and organizations.

In 1981, the Phoenix Institute negotiated a contract with the Utah Department of Social Services to research employer-supported child care and educate Utah employers about its benefits. In the following years, the Phoenix Institute Business and Child Care Project (BCC) received continuous funding contracts from the Utah Department of Social Services as well as a small contract from the Region VIII office of the Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

In the 3 years of BCC operation, the project has done pioneer work with employer education and employer assistance, providing services to 75 employers in the Salt Lake area. It has produced the nationally-acclaimed employer manual, Business and Child Care: A Dynamic New Partnership, as well as a broad-focus slide presentation on employer-supported child care. BCC was the Region VIII contractor in the Women's Bureau's nationwide initiative to develop innovative child care programs; the BCC goal to develop a child care program for this grant resulted in the founding of the Mountain Bell child care resource and referral service for its Salt Lake City employees. The BCC project staff also began working with the Junior League in 1982, to persuade them to fund and staff a child care resource and referral service for the Greater Salt Lake area. BCC staff have continuously communicated with other child care experimenters and consultants throughout the country to keep abreast of current information on employer-supported child care.

In late 1982, Phoenix Institute applied for a grant from the Office of Human Development Services (OHDS), Department of Health and Human Services, through the FY-1983 OHDS Consolidated Discretionary Funds Program for funds to develop a pilot project which would promote a voucher-paid child care benefit for low-income employees residing in the Salt Lake City area. This "voucher system" of employer-supported child care came about as BCC's response to the overwhelming resistance from employers who believed that child care inevitably involved a high-capital on-site center. The

voucher-paid child care system entailed providing services to low-income employees through the use of the services of existing child care providers. The employees would pay for the services and would then be reimbursed upon presenting vouchers to the employer who would pay the whole or partial cost as part of a worker benefit. The advantage to the employee would be the ability to choose a child care provider who could best meet the child's developmental needs and whose fees were within an affordable range.

AN OVERVIEW

The Voucher Project staff set out to accomplish the following objectives:

- to make educational presentations about the project to the community at large;
- to make educational presentations to 25 employers;
- to provide technical assistance including feasibility studies to 10 employers;
- to engage at least 3 employers to participate in the demonstration of the Voucher Project;
- to develop placement and reimbursement agreements for 50 children of low-income working parents employed by at least 3 participating employers;
- to do training on voucher system operation and employer needs assessments with at least 10 Junior League volunteers or other community volunteers;
- to do training on the child care delivery system with 50 private sector child care providers;
- to do training on the child care delivery system with parents of the children served by this project;
- to facilitate the connection of 3 participating employers with child care providers and the Junior League resource and referral (R&R) service for emplacing a voucher system;
- to produce a materials packet consisting of a management plan and a final report, which includes entry and exit summaries of project participants,
- to distribute 150 materials packets to others interested in replicating or adapting the project activities in other locales.

The selection of the voucher model is backed by BCC's research and information gathered through several years of child care presentations to Utah employers. BCC's advocacy of the voucher child care benefit is based on the fact that it would be less costly and more appealing to middle and small business owners who prefer that the responsibility of child care provision remain in the hands of parents, thereby freeing them from liability.

When the grant was awarded, Phoenix Institute's Director of Child Care Programs, Suzanne Clow, assumed management of the Voucher Project. Clow had been the principal child care developer in all of Phoenix's previous child care projects and was instrumental in acquiring the HHS grant. Clow hired an assistant as the other Voucher Project employee. Clerical, reception, bookkeeping and administrative services were provided by the Phoenix Institute's Administrative Services Department and charged to the project.

The Voucher Project team planned the activities to achieve project goals, detailing time lines, tasks and task assignments (see the attached chart of time lines and task assignments). The basic strategy underlying the task schedule entailed convincing a few progressive employers to become involved and allocate a modest amount of resources to a voucher child care project accessing the Junior League's Child Care Connection, a resource and referral service. Other activities included facilitating the establishment of the Junior League Child Care Connection, preparing a slide presentation and a materials packet for presentations to employers, and doing follow-up, technical assistance and consultation. Other important tasks included media relations to seed stories about child care and child care alternatives, and on-going communication with other child care developers and consultants. Finally, the project tasks included staff work and consultation with the state's Business and Child Care Advisory Board, the Child Care Advisory Council of Utah, and the Governor's Task Force on Integrating Women Into the Workforce. The Task Force was formed as a result of Governor Scott Matheson's concern for the growing numbers of women and children in poverty. He developed the Task Force to study the barriers to women from becoming economically self-sufficient.

A Schedule of Presentations

As part of their basic strategy regarding the Voucher Project, staff made a number of presentations to employers, the child care community, employee groups, and the community at large. A presentation typically took about an hour: 10 minutes of introduction, 30 minutes devoted to the slide presentation, and 20 minutes for a question-and-answer period, including a review of the handouts and information sheets. In the course of the Voucher Project, staff made the following presentations:

Employer Presentations:

- February 1, 1984: The voucher presentation was delivered at a large employer presentation hosted by Blue Cross, Blue Shield. 13 major employers of women from the Salt Lake area attended. Following the presentation, voucher materials packets and copies of the Business and Child Care manual were distributed and reviewed.

- February 27, 1984: Staff delivered a voucher presentation to the management of a small fast food business.

- February 28, 1984: Staff delivered the voucher presentation to the management of a large hotel, one of a national chain. The hotel employs a great number of women, and the management expressed concern about absenteeism and turnover in the hotel's workforce. They were considering a child care voucher as a means of competing with other hotels to attract and retain potential qualified employees.

- March 5, 1984: Staff delivered the voucher presentation to the management of a large retail drug and discount chain in the Salt Lake area.

- April 4, 1984: Staff delivered the voucher presentation to two personnel staffers employed by a large communications corporation based in Salt Lake City.

- June 27, 1984: Staff delivered the voucher presentation, this time hosted by American Savings and Loan. 10 employers saw the presentation, and engaged in a good discussion on child care. There was enthusiastic discussion following the presentation by a manager from Conant Associates about the company's on-site child care center. This discussion confirmed the great value of having a representative of a local employer provide information and answer questions based on the employer's experiences as an innovator in child care benefits.

- August 28, 1984: Staff delivered the voucher presentation to a major health maintenance organization. Staff also provided information on flexible benefits and referred the employer representative to a benefits consultant.

- September 21, 1984: Staff showed the slide presentation to a Salt Lake City Corporation child care task force. The task force was formed by Mayor Ted Wilson after he attended the White House employer presentation in March.

<u>Presentations to the Child Care Community</u>:

- January 17, 1984: The slide presentation was shown at the Department of Social Services Statewide Child Care Workers Training Seminar. One of the concerns of this group was that a resource and referral system set up by an employer would duplicate their efforts. But when the concept of the new system was clarified by BCC staff, the child care workers were supportive.

- February 6, 1984: Staff showed the slide presentation to the Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), which is made up of parents, providers and representatives from various community groups.

- February 22, 1984: Staff delivered the slide presentation to a group of university students in Early Childhood Education. The class was very receptive to the information and had a lot of questions. Many of the students think child care is a woman's and not a workplace issue. The presentation was a good consciousness raising for these women.

- March 5, 1984: Directors of the Northwest and Redwood Multipurpose Centers viewed the slide presentation. They are very interested in being involved in a Voucher/Employer Reserved Slots arrangement with some area businesses. They thought parents would be a key group to educate. They also toured the new Jr. League Child Care Connection.

- March 9, 1984: Directors of the VIP Child Care Center/Ogden came to Salt Lake City to see the slide presentation. They are interested in promoting the voucher option with downtown Ogden employers.

- May 5, 1984: The slide show was presented to a group of child care providers at the Annual Western Regional Family Child Care Conference. Two of the participants are involved in developing employer-supported child care in California. We discussed child care trends noting that resource and referral systems, and parent seminars are popular with employers. The voucher option was acknowledged as more appealing to employers than on-site child care.

Presentations to Employee Groups:

- July 10, 1984: Staff showed slide presentation to leadership of Utah Public Employees' Association (UPEA). The leadership wanted child care to be one of the issues at the September convention.

- August 21, 1984: Slide show was presented to the leadership of the Federally Employed Women. There was also a general discussion on child care issues.

- September 27, 1984: The BCC staff had a two-hour slot to show the slide presentation at the UPEA convention.

Presentations to the Community at Large:

- February 27, 1984: The slide show was presented at a Republican Governor's Commission. Ed Mayne, AFL-CIO, and Thayne Robson, University of Utah economist, spoke about the need for child care to be addressed in the workplace.

- March 1 & 2, 1984: The BCC staff had a booth at the American Society of Hospital Administrators (ASHA) conference. They exchanged information with personnel directors from various hospitals in the intermountain region.

- March 9, 1984: Staff presented the slide show at the Annual Conference of the Utah Council on Family Relations. The information provided was helpful to students and professionals alike in understanding the "corporate side" of policies that affect families.

- May 24, 1984: Project staff showed the slide presentation and co-presented information on child care with a Denver Child Care Consultant at a Tri-Regional WIN conference. George Ivans, Director of WIN, wants to purchase the slides to show WIN staff.

- July 18, 1984: Staff presented the slide show to the issues coordinator for Kem Gardner, one of the candidates for governor for the State of Utah.

- August 11, 1984: The slide show was presented at a Displaced Homemakers' workshop. There were several questions and concerns about licensed and unlicensed child care.

Public Testimonies

Suzanne Clow, Project Director, testified before the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families on December 6, 1983, regarding the need for child care and the status of employer-supported child care in Utah.

On May 16, 1984, Suzanne Clow and Carol Blackwell testified on behalf of the Child Care Advisory Council of Utah before the Interim Social Services Committee on the need for child care.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Resource and Referral

The Voucher Project staff found that many employers are interested in the idea of child care resource and referral services. This indicates that employers are aware of the desirability of sponsoring child care, particularly at low-cost, low-commitment level. The project's association with the start-up of the Junior League's resource and referral system, the Child Care Connection (CCC), proved to be a positive component of the Voucher Project. After the Junior League announced the opening of the CCC on March 1st, 1984, at the White House Office of Private Sector Initiatives luncheon for chief executive officers, several major businesses inquired about resource and referral (R&R) services for their employees. On July 1, 1984, the Junior League began to provide services on a contractual basis to IBM employees.

The long-term success of the CCC will be determined in part by the availability of adequate providers. In Salt Lake City there is a grave lack of licensed child care providers. The overwhelming majority of child care providers here, as elsewhere, are unlicensed, and cannot be readily registered

in a resource and referral system. Currently there are about 16,000 child care slots licensed by the State of Utah, and half of these are already occupied by children of AFDC recipients. Since there are approximately 105,000 children in Utah whose mothers work and who are not AFDC recipients, there is a tremendous shortage of licensed slots. As a result, the CCC, though adequately staffed, housed and equipped, is not yet able to provide a sufficiently responsive and effective service to allow wider-scale marketing of services to employers. Statistics from the final 8 months of operation are enclosed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that child care developers affiliate with a credible service organization such as the Junior League which can provide an effective computerized resource and referral service. An R&R system, with a good supply of licensed child care slots would be a marketable service in itself. The project staff feel that in the future it will be part of a marketable mixture of services, useful in providing a low-cost involvement to employers who want to experiment with providing child care. Once such a community service is in place, it is most efficient for employers to buy into the service rather than to duplicate R&R efforts within their businesses. There is a limit to the goodwill of Utah Department of Social Services in making child care provider lists available for free.

We also recommend promoting and recruiting providers before announcing the R&R system to employers. Child care developers should consider ways of working with licensing agencies to make sure that the procedures and criteria for licensure are appropriate for the growing child care market. Finally, in connection with R&R, we recommend continuing education with parents about the benefits of licensed child care and hard to find quality care.

Group Slide Presentations

Group presentations worked well in educating employers and child care professionals. The group format, with introduction, colorful half-hour slide presentation on the voucher option, and time to go over a materials packet, worked well in getting employers to talk about personnel and management concerns. The group dynamics of one employer presentation were particularly productive because there was an employer there who spoke from first-hand experience about her company's on-site center. She answered the questions very convincingly. We found that individual interviews with employers were less effective since the representatives seemed uncomfortable to talk about concerns, perhaps due to lack of peer support. The slide presentation was also used in individual meetings if the employer was interested. A copy of the slide presentation is on file with HHS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that group presentations be used to give a general overview and to spot interested employers, and that individual presentations follow thereafter. If developers are interested in implementing programs as quickly as possible, we recommend that they meet with business owners or high-ranking officials, the accountant or controller, as well as with personnel administrators and/or human resource managers. This would ensure that the developer deals with several decision makers.

Identifying Progressive Employers

An important part of project strategy was to be on the lookout for progressive employers. Project staff feel that this is a vital strategy for effective child care development projects. Stereotypes about child care being a "woman's issue" are very deeply rooted and difficult to change, and it is critical, at least initially, to reach people who are receptive to the idea of employer-supported child care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Developers should be alert for concerned and progressive employers. Project staff encountered a new breed of employer--often young, with a working spouse and young children, in a growing field such as financial services or high-tech enterprises--who seems more receptive to child care developments. We therefore recommend that developers remain keenly sensitive to the attitudes displayed by employer contacts and be prepared to pursue follow-up efforts accordingly.

The Voucher Packet

As part of the presentations, project staff prepared a packet of handouts on child care and the voucher concept. This packet was distributed at presentations and at appropriate employer contacts. A copy of the voucher packet is enclosed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that child care developers always make written handouts available to employers at the end of a presentation. Employers reported that they found the material informative, and project staff found it invaluable: it stimulated employer interest and provided back-up material and additional information to complement the discussion.

Media Relations

Staff met regularly with members of the media and seeded stories. Staff found it effective to work with influential senior writers or editorial staff who are sympathetic to child care problems of the workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We found the media relation more time-consuming than anticipated, and in the future, we would recommend a higher budget allowance for media relations if the project goals require high media exposure.

The Voucher Project Advisory Boards

When staff began the Voucher Project, they had several connections with different groups in state government such as the Child Care Advisory Council of Utah, and the Governor's Task Force on Integrating Women into the Workforce. In these and other contacts, Voucher Project staff were able to reach comparatively influential people committed to solving work and child care related problems.

Governor Scott Matheson's concern and interest in alleviating the many problems faced by women and children in Utah has been a tremendous asset in uniting the public and private sector to address vital issues concerning employment and child care for low-income, and usually single female-headed families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that child care developers involve themselves with state and local policy-making officials who are committed to solving problems and are progressive. We also recommend in the beginning that new child care developers establish advisory boards of their own, staffed with influential resource people who are interested in making changes.

Time Lines

The BCC project has been in operation for three years, and the community is just beginning to grapple with the needs of working parents. People are beginning to see child care concerns as community problems, and not just "women's problems." This re-definition process is critical to the success of a voucher project. For an employer to commit even a modest amount of operating funds to a voucher benefit, she or he has to see child care funding as a sensible business expense.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that child care developers make some long-term plans for funding which includes a combination of public and private funds to sustain their work. Realistically, developers need a working period of several years in which to educate employers, as well as the community at large, on how to solve the child care problems of today's working families.

Lack of Subsidy

Since the project did not provide matching funds as incentive for employers to try the voucher system, staff had a hard time selling the idea on its own merits. We concentrated our efforts on fairly large businesses--500 employees or more--who employ women at low salaries. We found that the businesses who seemed most receptive were the younger, progressive companies that were highly involved in computerized data networking or electronic technology. We received a wide range of responses to our presentations, but concern with expenses was most outstanding. We found employers who were genuinely sensitive to employees' needs, but didn't feel involvement in a voucher system was affordable. Large businesses felt that it would be too costly--as one employer expressed it, "Too many of my employees would need it!" A small business we worked with decided that it would be cheaper just to pay the one employee who needed child care assistance "under the table." For the employers contacted, the tax incentives of child care sponsorship were not sufficient incentive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that child care developers who are interested in quick results plan their funding so that they can subsidize employer and parent involvement directly with subsidy. This approach has been tried in a project in New Jersey, which resulted in a successful voucher child care system. We feel it is possible to implement a pilot voucher project without subsidizing funds, but it is slower and more risky: the developer is, as we were, dependent upon finding the right employer who is interested enough to take it on without an appealing dollar incentive.

Child Care in Flexible Benefit Plans

Some of the employers we worked with are looking into flexible benefit plans. Flexible benefit plans offer expanded options for today's diverse work force to choose from. For example, an employee whose working spouse has family medical insurance might choose a child care benefit to balance out the family's needs. We found that those employers who were most interested in setting up a voucher child care system would do so only as part of a flexible benefit plan. For example, two employers we contacted were working with outside consultants on a flexible benefit plan; three others felt that they would be adopting a flexible benefit plan in the future. After encountering this, we collected information on flexible benefits and met with some experts so we could give employers general information and referral.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that consultation on flexible benefits be left to experts in the field of compensation and benefits management. The child care developer should focus on presenting the child care options to the insurance companies, who can include it in their marketing packages to companies.

SUMMARY

One of the most rewarding accomplishments of the project was educating employers, parents, child care providers, and the community at large about child care issues, and introducing the voucher system as a viable alternative to expensive on-site child care centers. This was achieved through 23 presentations of the slide show, the dissemination of information packages, through 2 public testimonials and through Phoenix Institute's co-sponsorship of the White House Private Sector initiatives Briefing Session for the Greater Salt Lake area. The BCC staff's three years of experience in employer-supported child care projects facilitated this educational process.

In the first year of the Business and Child Care Project an advisory board was created. Members were selected from the private and public sectors, local university, and the child care provider community. The board members provided staff with a variety of expertise and contacts.

One private sector member sponsored one of our large employer presentations in his board room; another member of the board, a tax attorney, attended presentations and was ready to answer any detailed tax questions that the employers had. Another member of the board worked for Community and Economic Development, and was aware of child care needs in the state, and had good ideas on how to reach employers of single female heads of household. The university professor was very knowledgeable about child care issues and had a good number of articles published on employer-supported child care. Another member of the Advisory Board was a representative of the State Licensing Division within the Department of Social Services. She was knowledgeable in general child care issues and was helpful in answering questions about licensing and quality child care.

Staff were also very effective in educating the community and in bringing about changes in public policy through their affiliations with such organizations as the Governor's Taskforce on Integrating Women into the Work Force, the White House Steering Committee, and the Child Care Advisory Council of Utah.

The Business and Child Care staff were successful in promoting the voucher child care option with employers. Employers responded very positively to our educational slide presentations and found the written handouts informative.

Five employers wanted additional information about incorporating the voucher child care idea into a flexible benefits plan. In contacting those employers recently we have found that two private sector employers are still studying flexible benefit plans with a child care component; one public entity set up a flexible benefit plan without a child care component because of cost; another private business decided against a flexible benefit plan because of cost; a public utility is now surveying employee need.

Working with the media was another effective way of educating the community at large about the voucher child care option. We had a couple of particularly important media events that promoted our work. Each time we made a group employer presentation, the media responded with good coverage and we almost always had a call or two from an employer as a result. For example, the White House Private Sector Initiatives presentation to employers and the briefing session for the community at large received both newspaper and television coverage. The national focus on child care issues was timely and enchanced our efforts in creating community awareness and concern. A good example of local media response was the series, "Your Children, Our Children" which was aired this summer on a local public television station. The aim of the child care film segment was to promote employer-supported child care, and to address child care issues in general.

In late spring, staff joined a committee set up to further promote the educational benefit of the television series. This was accomplished by setting up a community viewing of the series by bringing together employers who had viewed the voucher slide presentation, and other individuals who had expressed interest in employer-supported child care.

The last major event that received valuable media coverage was a symposium on the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Integrating Women into the Workforce. The task force, which was formed to study the problems that prevent single female heads of household from becoming self-sufficient, identified child care as one of the major barriers. In its recommendations, the task force emphasized the need for employers to help solve child care problems of working single parents. Various community work groups met in order to develop action plans based on the recommendations of the task force. The voucher project staff were successful in ensuring that the employers they worked with were invited and participated in the symposium held to discuss the efforts of the work groups.

In summary, the Business and Child Care staff were very successful in linking groups with similar interests and needs. By being involved with the White House presentation in March, and doing follow-up with employers participating through a task force, we were able to take advantage of the child care related efforts going on in this community, and ensure the on-going education of employers about child care at very little cost.

Another major success of the voucher project was the start-up of the Junior League's Child Care Connection. It was a very timely part of the project because the community was ready for a child care resource and referral service, and employers were interested in it because of its low cost. Staff's working relationship with Junior League members, including the training of their volunteers and working with two additional volunteers to help tally the child care survey, had a positive outcome for the project.

Even though we did not set-up the child care voucher option with any employers during the project year, we still feel successful in promoting the concept and believe that it is one of those options that in the future will be incorporated in flexible benefit plans.

The voucher project staff appreciated the opportunity to work with staff from the Department of Health and Human Services, Region VIII. Staff who were particularly helpful were Lemm Allen, Regional Administrator for the Office of Human Development Services and Ed Lazo, Project Officer, for our project. Both individuals were available when questions arose and provided guidance when necessary.

II. CHILD CARE TRENDS IN UTAH - DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

UTAH'S CONSERVATIVE ATTITUDES

Traditionally, both at the national and local levels, working parents have dealt with child care problems without involving their employers. Introducing innovative child care concepts is not an easy task. The child care developer is often faced with resistance both from employers and the community.

In Utah, the task of promoting an employer-supported child care system is complicated by strong beliefs that the care of children--even those of working parents--is the responsibility of the family. Employers as well as employees who share this belief are reluctant to grapple with issues concerning child care problems. As a result, child care developers in Utah need not only to convince employers that child care sponsorship is a promising investment, but also to convince working parents that a child care partnership is a legitimate and viable option and not a means of shunning the responsibilities of parenting.

THE IMMINENCE OF CHANGE

There is a growing awareness in Utah that attitudes about work and business need to change. Most Utahns, conservative and liberal alike, agree that Utah needs new and relocated businesses. Utah's present governor has made economic development a high priority of his administration, and his successor has pledged to carry this forth in the years to come. The larger area Chambers of Commerce have made significant commitments of time, energy and money to economic development activities, as have the larger local and municipal governments in the Salt Lake City area, participating in trade missions to other areas of the U.S., Europe, and Asia.

The virtual shutdown of some of Utah's industrial giants of the past--Kennecott Copper, Anaconda, the Geneva works of U.S. Steel--have made the attraction of new firms in healthier industries a matter of great urgency in Utah. The distant beacons for Utah's economic developers are Massachusetts and Silicon Valley, centers of development and manufacturers of computers and related services. To lure these industries, Utah has some attractions: a comparatively well-educated and industrious workforce, a discreet union presence, a university with particular prominence in computer graphics, bio-engineering and artificial organs, and abundant recreational opportunities of the kind that seem to attract new-age professionals, such as skiing and camping.

In addition to this kind of highly targeted economic development, Utah is attracting influential investors. Most notably, the Kashoggi family of Saudia Arabia is investing millions into large real estate developments in the Salt Lake area: the International Center, a plush industrial park located near the Salt Lake Airport, and the Triad Center, an office and retail development in Salt Lake's Guadalupe District.

Officials like the present governor are aware that the new industries such as computer development and bio-technology, embody new attitudes about work and sex roles, and that a striking high proportion of these new professionals are members of two-career couples of child-bearing and child-rearing age. Officials are also aware that these firms often compete fiercely for qualified staff and do so by providing accommodating benefits packages and working environments, as well as enviable salaries.

Still another reason for imminent change is the demographic profile of Utah's working population. Utah has the highest birth rate and youngest working population of all the states in the U.S. More than 52% of Utah women between 16 and 64 work outside the home. Despite existing traditional attitudes about child care, the need for change is obvious, and is being recognized by influential factions such as the L.D.S. Church.

The BCC staff are very pleased with the Church's readiness to study the problem and make plans for change, especially on behalf of single heads of household. We believe that it is only a matter of time before the Church takes action to recognize and meet the needs of families of its members. Modeling by the Church has a profound influence on individual and community activities, and we expect that the Church's response will make a significant difference in the community's readiness to accept innovative ideas for child care sponsorship.

In addition to the Church influence for change, there is a strong tradition of child care advocacy in Utah. Most notable are Utah Issues, a low-income advocacy group which has been a major influence in shaping and steering Utah State Department of Social Services policies for the poor and underprivileged; the Phoenix Institute, a community-based organization which specializes in job training and support services for low-income women; the Child Care Advisory Council of Utah, which advises Utah State Department of Social Services on child care issues; and two active child care provider organizations, the Professional Family Child Care Association and the Child Care Organization (an alliance of child care centers). Furthermore, there are a number of knowledgeable professionals in colleges, universities and public agencies that have been regular and reliable advocates for children and their working parents. Much of this is just now being clearly heard by employers and high officials.

Finally, media treatment of child care issues and appeals for open, thoughtful attention to child care as a community issue has been abundant in the past two years in the Salt Lake area. Child care is being transformed from a "woman's" issue or a "family" issue to an economic issue, and one in which public policy and private enterprise legitimately play a part.

WORKING WITH HIGH-LEVEL POLICYMAKERS

From the beginning of our involvement in child care, we have emphasized the importance of the public sector's role modeling in the establishment of innovative child care benefits. An invigorating development has been the serious attention paid to employer-supported child care by high-level policy boards in Utah state government and in some local governments in the Salt Lake area. For example, the State Employee Child Care Task Force, a division of the employees' association, is looking at flexible benefits and at a voucher or center program. Two state entities, the American Fork Training School and the Utah State Department of Health, are being considered for on-site centers. The University of Utah Child Care Task Force is currently surveying the need for an employee child care program, and is investigating the possibility of a center or an R&R system.

The Salt Lake City Corporation has established a child care task force to study needs for worker child care. The Salt Lake County Personnel Director has included recommendations for an on-site facility in the contemplated new County office complex.

A major development has been the release of "Utah Women in Economic Crisis," the long-awaited report from the Governor's Task Force on Integrating Women into the Workforce. Among other things, the Task Force recommends that, " . . . the governor mandate increased funding for training and support services for women who head households. Agencies providing support services should also be mandated to initiate planning with private sector representatives to develop public/private child care services."

And finally, the Interim Social Services Committee of the Utah legislature has made child care a second priority study area for the current year. Major recommendations being reviewed are passage of a Utah child care tax credit bill, and funding support for employer-supported child care initiatives.

Because of this public sector interest in child care development, we anticipate that the past and continuing work of these high-level policy boards will deliver results in the near future.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Action at the Local Level

   RECOMMENDATION: Leadership in developing an effective child care delivery system must come from the public sector. State and local governments must model innovative child care benefits and act as a catalyst and resource for other employers.

RECOMMENDATION: State economic developers need to be knowledgeable about what Utah employers are doing to support child care so they can give this information to businesses thinking about moving into the state.

RECOMMENDATION: Local and state governments should consider policies establishing guidelines whereby new employers moving into the area demonstrate that they are planning child care services and dedicating a percentage of their development costs toward child care service delivery.

RECOMMENDATION: Utah State Department of Social Services should take a close and critical look at its child care licensing policy. At present, there is a shortage of licensed providers. Many providers do not want the hassle of becoming licensed. This fact impacts child care systems all the way down the line. Child Care Connection's resource and referral system is now much less effective than it could be, because it cannot make placements as readily as it needs to. We believe that child care licensing has worked for the Utah State Department of Social Services, as a way of providing a referral pool for public assistance grant recipients, but not necessarily for the parent, the employer, or the private child care provider. It is time for the licensing system to respond to the needs of a broader segment of the community.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend the establishment of an education process for regulatory agencies, zoning and other public officials who work with child care providers. It is critical that all concerned work together in a way that permits new child care businesses to respond to needs at a reasonable cost.

RECOMMENDATION: It is important that child care development work involve all sectors of the community at once: public and private employers, policy makers, parents, providers, space planners, real estate developers, employee associations, etc. When significant changes take place, it will be because the legislature, the school boards, parents, churches, child care providers and community-based organizations have adopted similar, important goals and objectives.

2. Action at the National Level

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend the establishment of a national clearinghouse that would serve as a resource and referral center for people interested in obtaining written and visual materials on the wide variety of child care issues related to employer-supported child care. The BCC staff have found that there is too much duplication of information and no centralized system of locating resource people. This recommendation is a goal of the newly formed Child Care Action Campaign, New York.

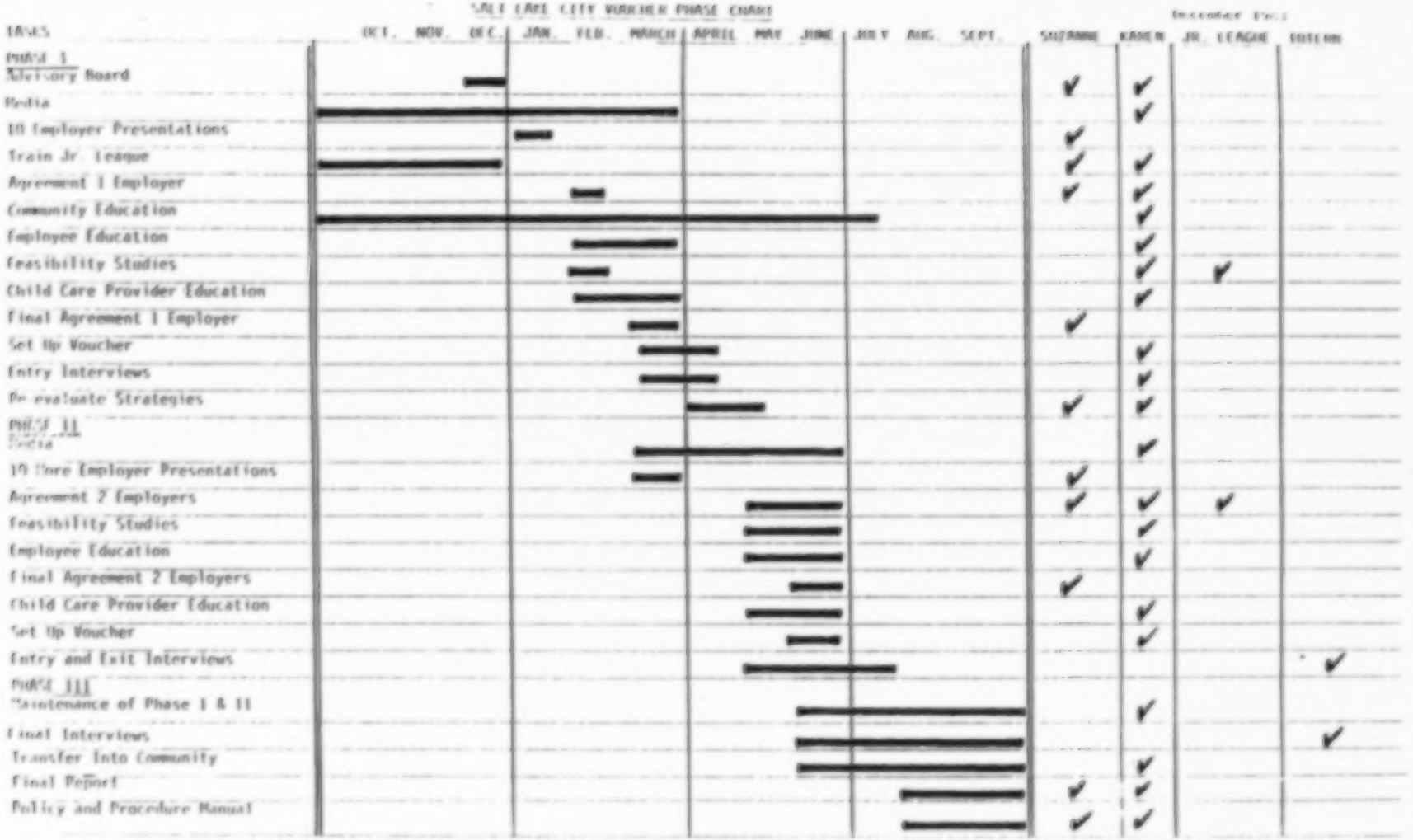
RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that a campaign be undertaken--perhaps a media campaign--to educate the public on the importance of early childhood development. Through a media campaign, the public could be encouraged to see pre-school child care as an invaluable professional undertaking that is crucial to the country's educational and social system, and this would be a big step toward assignment of the proper value to child care.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that child care developers and advocates resume a national lobbying effort with the goal of establishing a national family and child care policy which would give credibility to child care.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Voucher Project Phase Chart


SALT LAKE CITY VOUCHER PHASE CHART
DAYS
OCT. NOV. DEC. JAN. FEB. MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT.
SUZANNE
KAREN
JR. LEAGUE
PHASE I
Advisory Board
Media
10 Employer Presentations
Train Jr. League
Agreement 1 Employer
Community Education
Employee Education
Feasibility Studies
Child Care Provider Education
Final Agreement 1 Employer
Set Up Voucher
Entry Interviews
Re-evaluate Strategies
PHASE II
Media
10 More Employer Presentations
Agreement 2 Employers
Feasibility Studies
Employee Education
Final Agreement 2 Employers
Child Care Provider Education
Set Up Voucher
Entry and Exit Interviews
PHASE III
Maintenance of Phase I & II
Final Interviews
Transfer into Community
Final Report
Policy and Procedure Manual

Appendix B

Child Care Connection

Junior League of Salt Lake City, Inc.

CHILD CARE CONNECTION:
A CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SERVICE

by Patty Kimball

Child Care Connection is a child care resource and referral service operated and funded by the Junior League of Salt Lake City, Inc. The purpose of the service is primarily to help parents find the kind of child care they want and can afford. Secondarily, by making it easier to find child care, and educating parents to become more quality-conscious, Child Care Connection acts as a catalyst to improve the quality and availability of child care. The service is free both to parents looking for child care and for child care providers who wish to be referred. Run entirely by volunteers, and computerized since it opened in March of 1984, Child Care Connection is unique among child care resource and referral services nationwide.

Whereas the service exists primarily for parents in general, it is mostly women, mothers employed outside the home, who want help. In fact, the idea of Child Care Connection resulted from a Junior League survey of unmet community needs which revealed a lack of support systems for women in the workforce. At the same time, members of the Junior League of Salt Lake City, Inc. had indicated an interest in volunteering in the area of women's issues. With the assistance of Suzanne Clow of the Phoenix Institute, Mary Olsen and Pat Kreher of the Utah State Department of Social Services, and other individuals within the child care community, work on the project began in June of 1983 and the service was opened to the public the following March. The staff consisted of two volunteer co-directors and 15 additional volunteers. The budget for 1983-84 was $8420. A 17-member community advisory board was also created to assist and guide the project.

Besides parents, Child Care Connection is responsive as well to (1) child care providers and (2) employers. Child care providers, mostly women providing child care in their homes and who, according to a member of the Professional Family Child Care Association, makes an average hourly wage of $2.68 (and thus, in the words of Mary Olsen of the Utah State Department of Social Services, "are subsidizing working America") are eager to maintain a steady clientele. They welcome Child Care Connection's help in sending them parents and thereby helping them avoid costly vacancies.

Employers, increasingly aware of the costs of turnover, absenteeism and productivity attributable to the child care problems of their employees, are also interested in Child Care Connection. Two Child Care Connection volunteers have assisted Suzanne Clow of the Phoenix Institute in child care needs assessment of local employers. Three employers have expressed interest in providing child care resource and referral for their employees. Although still in the negotiation

stage, Child Care Connection is working with a consortium of large employers, led by American Express, to procure a portable computer that would allow Child Care Connection to travel to the work site to provide resource and referral for employees. In addition, Child Care Connection is the local contractor with Work/Family Directions, a business consulting firm in Boston, MA, which has been hired by IBM to provide child care referrals to their employees nationwide.

Working with parents, child care providers and employers, Child Care Connection is in a sensitive position to assess the performance of the existing child care system. A data intake system has been devised, the first several months' results of which are appended, to monitor needs and trends within the community. This data will be of use to public officials and other interested individuals and organizations who address the child care issue. Child Care Connection also publishes a quarterly newsletter, the first issue of which is also appended.

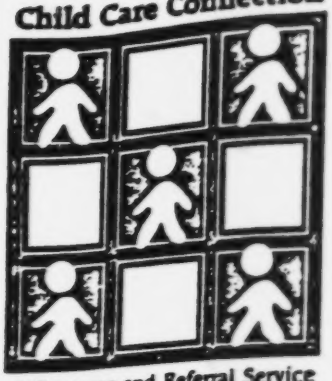
It is anticipated that Child Care Connection will remain a Junior League funded and staffed project for at least two more years. For 1984-85, 19 volunteers and a budget of $8490 are committed. At the end of Junior League involvement, it is likely that the Phoenix Institute will assume responsibility for the service.

CHILD CARE CONNECTION

Statistical Summary: March - September 1984

	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Total Referrals	80	116	107	83	95	140	248
Children Needing Care	100	167	127	116	145	184	296
Client Type							
Male	8%	7%	8%	8%	6%	6%	5%
Female	92	93	92	92	94	94	95
Parent	96	97	96	98	97	93	93
Other	4	2	4	2	3	7	7
Household							
Two Parents	78%	72%	66%	72%	74%	76%	79%
Single Mother	16	22	30	22	24	23	20
Single Father	5	6	1	6	5	6	1
Average number of children	1.75	2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.45
Average age of child needing care (years)	2	2.6	2.4*	2.8	2.3	2.8**	2.2***
* 36% under 1 year							
** 27% under 1 year							
*** 26% under 1 year							
Hours Care Needed							
Full-Time	46%	52%	57%	60%	58%	46%	48%
Part-Time	32	27	20	39	22	30	33
Type of Care Preferred							
Family Provider	44%	54%	55%	73%	80%	58%	58%
Child Care Center	23	28	25	33	8	23	18
In-Home	21	11	12	10	7	13	14
Reason for Child Care							
Employed Full-Time	43%	58%	69%	47%	61%	49%	45%
Employed Part-Time	21	23	9	22	24	22	19
Looking for Work	7	5	1	4	3	4	7
School/Job Training	11	7	10	10	8	19	18
Personal Needs of Parent	7	3	3	0	1	4	2
How They Found Child Care Connection							
Print Media	27%	63%	51%	22%	15%	11%	40%
TV/Radio	16	0	3	5	4	0	11
Phoenix Institute	13	7	5	0	15	10	5
Friends	10	7	12	12	29	14	12
Social Services	8	6	5	22	9	4	7
Child Care Providers	0	4	3	8	7	8	5

Child Care Connection



A Resource and Referral Service

Child Care Connection NEWSLETTER

Summer 1984

Connecting Parents and Providers

In its first two months of operation, CHILD CARE CONNECTION made 196 child care referrals, representing a population of 268 children, at an average age of 2.3 years. Our typical referral is to a full-time working mother, who is married with an average of two children who need child care (see box).

Most of these women are looking for full-time slots with a family child care provider (one who takes children into her own home), who is located close to the children's home, parents' place of work or along the route between the two. To date, the locations most often requested are close to the center of Salt Lake City and on its east side (zip code 84101, 84102, 84103, 84105, 84108, 84112). Clients have most frequently heard about CHILD CARE CONNECTION from the newspaper (ads, articles) or they have been referred to us by the Phoenix Institute, friends, social services personnel or child care providers themselves.

Are our referrals successful? In March, a follow-up revealed only one client out of the ten called (equalling a 12% sample size, randomly selected) had found a child care provider as a result of our service. In April, the news was much better: four clients out of the ten called (equalling a 9% sample size, randomly selected) had found providers that met their needs. Those clients for whom the CHILD CARE CONNECTION referral wasn't successful most often reported that the providers didn't have any openings or wouldn't take an infant (age one year or less).

Clearly, child care providers are critical to our success and we need more of them in our system. Currently we list close to a third of all licensed child care providers in the Salt Lake area and more are now coming in as a result of a renewed appeal sent out in May. Plus a campaign is underway to make personal contacts with providers to explain who we are and what we are trying to do. Helping parents find the child care they need is only possible if that child care is available and we know where to find it.

Patty Kimball
Co-director
CHILD CARE CONNECTION

Stats

	March	April
Total Referrals	80	116
Children Needing Care	100	167
Client Type:		
Male	8%	7%
Female	92%	93%
Parent	96%	97%
Other	4%	2%
Household:		
Two Parents	78%	72%
Single Mother	16%	22%
Single Father	5%	6%
Average Number of Children	1.75	2
Average Age of Child Needing Care	2 yrs.	2.6 yrs.
Hours Care Needed:		
Full-time	46%	52%
Part-time	32%	27%
Type of Care Preferred:		
Family Provider	44%	54%
Child Care Center	23%	29%
In-home	21%	11%
Reason for Child Care:		
Employed Full-time	43%	58%
Employed Part-time	21%	23%
Looking for Work	7%	5%
School/Job Training	11%	7%
Personal Needs of Parent	7%	3%
How They Found CHILD CARE CONNECTION:		
Newspaper	27%	63%
Television	16%	0%
Phoenix Institute	13%	7%
Friends	10%	7%
Social Services	8%	6%
Child Care Providers	0%	4%

Statement of Purpose

CHILD CARE CONNECTION is a free, computerized child care resource and referral service for parents looking for child care in the Salt Lake area. We help parents locate the kind of child care they want, where they want it and at a price they can afford. Call 537-1044.

Child Care Connection
A Resource and Referral Service
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Child Care Connection is a community service project of The Junior League of Salt Lake City

Connecting Employers

Because of the growing number of women in the work force, employers find themselves actively involved in the child care issue. With the help of the Business and Child Care Project of the Phoenix Institute, innovative employers, realizing the benefits of lower absenteeism and turnover, are looking into the possibility of helping employees meet their child care needs. And two CHILD CARE CONNECTION volunteers are assisting in this process.

To date, a presentation to employers in February, hosted by Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and several business needs assessment surveys (surveys that determine the child care needs of employees from a particular business), have been accomplished. Another employer presentation, this time targeting the financial services industry, will be held in the near future, hosted by American Savings. American Express has indicated great interest in employer-sponsored child care benefits and has made tentative plans to provide child care resource and referral and child care seminars for their employees.

As employers recognize the impact of child care on their business, many are beginning to consider including child care benefits as part of a flexible benefits package or "cafeteria" plan for their employees right along with health insurance and other fringe benefits.

Robin Bailey
Volunteer
Employer-Sponsored Child Care

Connecting the Child Care Community

CHILD CARE CONNECTION is fortunate to have the help of several individuals from the community who deal with the child care issue. These people graciously function as an advisory board and as an education resource for CHILD CARE CONNECTION. They have already met twice and will continue to meet on a quarterly basis. We are grateful for these individuals' help and thank them for their support. They are:

Carol Blackwell
Child Care Advisory Council

Skip Branch
Single Father

Suzanne Clow
Phoenix Institute

Marlene Dangerfield
Mountain Bell

Kris Hale
Early Childhood Development Specialist

Sher Hassard
Utah Child Care Association

Dixie Stewart
Professional Family Day Care Association

Joan Nabors
Salt Lake Institute for Learning

Mary Olsen
Utah State Division of Family Services

Terry Rampton
Junior League of Salt Lake City

Karen Shepherd
Network Magazine

Anita Sievers
Family and Consumer Studies
University of Utah

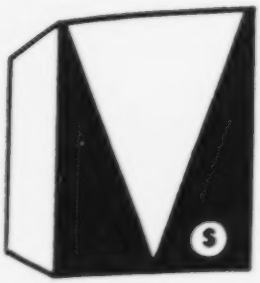
Tineka Van Dijk
Community Action Program

Shelley Williams
Working Mother

Irene Fisher
Utah Issues

Kathy Wilson
Parent

Gwen Rowley
Facilitator
CHILD CARE CONNECTION
Advisory Board



VOUCHER

CHILD CARE BENEFIT OF THE 80's

- Employee chooses child care provider and is liable party.
- Employer reimburses all or part of child care costs.

BENEFITS

- Tax free benefit to employee
- Maximizes employee's options in choosing child care
- Tax deductible for employer

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYER SPONSORED CHILD CARE

Contact:

Karen Feldman
Business & Child Care Project
Phoenix Institute
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 532-6190

We exist because people change

CHILD CARE RESOURCES

Prepared for Voucher Child Care Presentation
to Employers in Greater Salt Lake Area

Blue Cross/Blue Shield
February 1, 1984

Utah Resources

Phoenix Institute
Suzanne L. Clow, Associate Director
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
532-6190
(Fed. and State-funded Business and Child Care Projects, provides technical assistance to employers)

Salt Lake Junior League
Child Care Resource and Referral Service
Karen Hyde and Patty Kimball, Co-directors
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
581-1941 or 272-2437
(Administer information on how to find licensed child care; provides computerized listing of licensed home and center child care providers; FREE service to employers and working parents)

Utah Issues
Irene Fisher, Director
231 E. 100 S.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
521-2035
(Advocacy for low-income Utah families)

Utah State Department of Social Services
Division of Children, Youth and Families
Pat Kreher, Monitoring
150 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110-2500
533-5094
(License and monitor child care homes and centers)

Child Care Advisory Council of Utah
Utah State Department of Social Services
Suzanne L. Clow, Chairperson
150 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110-2500
533-5094
(Advises DSS on all child-related issues, advocates for children)

The Professional Family Child Care Association of Utah
Jessie M. Loosle, President
955 E. South Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103
359-3430

(Promotes professionalism of family child care, provides informal referral to licensed child care homes)

Utah Child Care Association
Sher Hassard, President
2199 E. 7110 S.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84121
278-4813
(Association of center directors, promotes center care)

Utah Association for the Education of Young Children
Elaine Ashcroft, President
Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84321
(Advocates quality educational experience for children thru high quality training of teachers)

Bibliography

Business and Child Care, A Dynamic New Partnership. Phoenix Institute, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1982.

Tax Incentives for Employer-Sponsored Day Care Programs. Commerce Clearing House, Inc. Chicago, Illinois, March 1982.

Who's Taking Care of Our Kids? A Report on a Child Care Survey. Utah Issues Information Program. Salt Lake City, Utah, April 1982.

The General Mills American Family Report. Families At Work: Strengths and Strains. Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1980-81.

New Management Initiatives for Working Parents. Conference Report. Edited by Clifford Baden and Dana E. Friedman, published by Office of Continuing Education, Wheelock College, April 1981.

Women in Utah's Labor Force, 1950-1980. Utah Department of Employment Security, September 1981.

BUSINESS AND CHILD CARE CONSULTING

A Utah Resource

The Business and Child Care Consulting Team at Phoenix Institute can provide your company with high quality technical assistance in setting up a child care program. The following technical assistance is available to employers:

- General slide presentation on Employer-Sponsored Child Care
- Slide presentation on Voucher Child Care Option
- Develop and administer feasibility studies
  - Assess employee child care needs
  - Assess management problems related to employee child care problems
- Develop and assist Task Force to study child care needs
- Provide information on employer-sponsored child care programs inside and outside of Utah
- Prepare cost analysis
- Provide information on available licensed child care in area of interest
- Provide information on community resources
- Facilitate communication and good working relationship between employer, employee and child care provider
- Develop and put into place a child care program
- Provide printed materials

The Business and Child Care Consulting Team at Phoenix Institute looks forward to working with employers on an individual or group basis. Please contact one of these Consultants for assistance:

Karen Feldman or Suzanne Clow
Phoenix Institute
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
801-532-6190

The Business and Child Care Consulting Team is currently funded by grants from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Utan State Department of Social Services.

LIST OF EMPLOYER SUPPORTED

VOUCHER PROGRAMS

IN THE U.S. 1981-82

KPFA Radio
2207 Shattuck
Berkeley, CA 94704
Established 1980
Description:Monthly flat rate reimbursement

PALM HARBOR GENERAL HOSPITAL
12601 Garden Grove Boulevard
Garden Grove, CA 92643
Established 1981
Description:Monthly flat rate reimbursement

TIMESAVERS
1296 Lawrence Station Road
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
Temporary Employment Service
Description:% reimbursement

[illegible] DATA,INC.
3540 S. Poplar
Denver, CO 80237
Data Entry/Keypunch
Description:% reimbursement for licenced child
care for children under 12 years
Established 1978

BURGER KING
70 Airport Road
Hartford, CT 06114
Fast Food Franchise
Established 1980
Description:Total reimbursement

[illegible] COORDINATED CHILD CARE CENTRAL FLORIDA INC.
216 Broadway
Orlando, FL 32803
2 Companies (confidential)
Description:Financial assistance for income eligible
employees

[illegible] HOSPITAL
P.O. Box 4910
Hialeah, FL 33014
Description:% reimbursement at approved centers

[illegible] CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM
575 Technology Square
Cambridge, MA 01230
Polaroid Corporation
Established 1971
Description:Nation-wide sliding scale reimbursement
for income eligible employees

CHILDRENS HOSPITAL
345 N. Smith
St. Paul, MN 55102
Established 1980
Description:% reimbursement for licensed child care

UNITED HOSPITAL
333 N. Smith
St. Paul, MN 55102
Established 1980
Description:% reimbursement for licensed child care

SUNRISE HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER
3186 Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89109
Established 1981
Description:Flat hourly rate reimbursement in
approved facilities

FORD FOUNDATION
320 E. 43rd
New York, NY 10017
Charitable Institution
Established 1972
Description:% reimbursement for income eligible employees'
children under 12 years

HORSHAM HOSPITAL
Welsh Road and Butler Pike
Ambler, PA 19002
Established 1981
Description:% reimbursement for licensed child care

ROSEWOOD GENERAL HOSPITAL
8200 Westheimer
Houston, TX 77063
Description:Flat hourly rate child care reimbursement for
nurses and pharmacy personnel on evening shift

PUGET CONSUMER COOPERATIVE
6514 Fremont Avenue, N.
Seattle, WA 98103
Retail Food
Description:Flat hourly rate child care partial reimbursement
for children under 18

CHILD CARE INFORMATION SERVICE
563 E. Villa
Pasadena, CA 91101
Private, non-profit agency
Established 1981
Description:Monthly flat rate reimbursement for licensed
child care (optional alternative to health insurance)

The above information is from "National Employer supported child care Project"
Sandra L. Burud, Principal Investigator
Child Care Information Service, P.O. Box 40652 Pasadena, CA 40652

Title Data Inc.

January 25, 1984

Phoenix Institute of Salt Lake City
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

ATTN: Karen Feldman

Dear Ms. Feldman:

As per telephone conversations with you, this letter is being sent to The Phoenix Institute in order to reafform our company's strong support of company-sponsored child care benefit programs, and to encourage like or similar programs in other areas.

Our programs was established in April of 1978 as a voucher program (employee submits paid receipts showing amount paid, dates involved, and names of children). We in turn reimburse employees for a portion of what they pay (which presently is 50%). There are several eligibility requirements per attached letter.

The program was initially begun by upper management to encourage employees whom we train, to stay with our company; to help defray the high costs of day care; and to offer a benefit which an employee with children can actually see (money coming back to them to help with their day care expenses.

Our company, with branches in several different states, employs between 100-125 employees. Of them about 25-30% receive the day care benefit (although all employees are eligible per attached letter).

Again, we are encouraged with the interest in company-sponsored day care programs which are emerging throughout the United States, and recommend most highly similar programs. We have always had 100% cooperations from our employees who receive the benefit and have found it an easy program to administer.

If you have other questions, or if I can be of further help, please advise.

Sincerely,

Jennie Herbert
Ad. Asst.

Enc.

Denver Branch Office, 3540 S. Poplar St., Suite 201, Denver, Colorado 80237, (303) 758-5344

F

March 17, 1978

TO: TDI EMPLOYEES

FROM: CATHERINE ROONEY, BRANCH MANAGER

RE: DAY CARE BENEFIT REGULATIONS

1. Effective date of day care benefit program - April 1, 1978.

2. Payment will be made to employee on the 5th and the 20th of each month, with the initial payment being dispursed on April 20, 1978.

3. In order to be eligible for day care benefits, employee must have worked for Title Data for at least three (3) months, and be a full-time employee.

4. Child/children's ages must not exceed 12 years of age.

5. Child/children must live full-time with parent. This regulation will be on the honor system.

6. Payment will not be given when employee is on vacation or taking sick-leave.

7. Benefit rate will be as follows:

Full-time day care for children up to kindergarten age	
School year	Summer
$12/wk/child	$12/wk/child

Part-time day care for children up to 12 years of age	
School year	Summer
$4/wk/child	$12/wk/child

MAXIMUM PAYMENT to any employee for any one week will not exceed $25.00.

8. In order to be eligible to participate in the day care benefit program, please bring in your most recent receipt or canceled check to determine eligibility (that you are indeed paying for day care services).

If you are not eligible on April 1, 1978, please bring in receipt or canceled check prior to the time that you will be eligible to participate in the program.

If you do not presently receive a receipt or use your canceled check for receipt of payment, please ask your day care center/sitter/etc., for one.

Reprinted with permission of Austin Families, Inc.

THE CHILDCARE VOUCHER PROGRAM

This year the AISD is offering a new program for its Transportation Department employees--a childcare voucher program. The program is scheduled to operate from September 1982 through May 1983. Because it is a demonstration project, the size of the program will be limited to approximately 50 pre-school and 50 school-age children. Parents are urged to register early.

WHAT IS A CHILD CARE VOUCHER?

Under this program, the AISD will pay 50% of an employee's child care costs (up to a specified maximum amount) at any licensed child care center, registered family day home, or after school program at an elementary school. The parent is responsible for paying the other 50% of the cost. Only licensed or registered care will be covered and AISD's payment will be made directly to the childcare provider. The program will be administered by a non-profit community agency, Austin Families Inc.

WHO WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM?

Most Transportation Department employees with children 10 years of age or younger will be eligible. (Children needing special education care will be considered without regard to this age limit). If a parent is already receiving subsidized care through a publicly funded program, s/he will not be eligible to participate in the AISD program. First priority will be given to the children of bus drivers, followed by children of bus monitors, and finally, children of other Transportation employees.

HOW WILL THE PROGRAM WORK?

Once an employee is accepted into the childcare voucher program, s/he should contact Austin Families. If the parent is already using licensed or registered care that s/he would like to continue using under the voucher program, Austin Families must be informed of the provider's name. If the parent needs to find licensed or registered care so as to be eligible to receive the voucher benefit, the Austin Families referral specialist will discuss needs and preferences for childcare with the parent, will look for childcare providers that meet the parent's needs, and will then contact the parent with these referrals. (Austin Families maintains a resource file of licensed and registered family day homes in the Austin area). After visiting these providers, the parent selects the care that s/he would like to use and notifies Austin Families of the selection and the enrollment date.

Austin Families then contacts the selected childcare provider to make arrangements for the voucher payments. The voucher payments cover 50% of the cost of care. Extra fees for registration, special activities or transportation are the parent's responsibility. (Transportation between the school and center for school age children is considered part of the cost of care, however). The parent makes his or her payments directly to the providers at the time of enrollment and on the 1st and 15th of each month unless other arrangements are agreed upon. Austin Families pays the provider twice each month, after receiving documentation from the provider of the child(ren)'s attendance during that period.

The parent should notify Austin Families of: (1) any change in employment status; (2) any change in enrollment of the child(ren); and (3) the reason for the child(ren) being absent from the childcare if five or more days in a row are missed. If the parent is not pleased with the care at any time, Austin Families will help to locate other care and

arrange for the voucher assistance to be transferred.

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR THE PROGRAM?

Before August 27, applications will be available at the driver workshops (held from August 16-18), from the dispatchers (from August 23-27), and from the main Transportation office. Applications should be returned to AISD or Austin Families representatives at the workshops, to the dispatchers, or to the main Transportation office. Parents are requested to submit their applications by August 27. No applications will be accepted from August 28 through September 5.

Additional applications will be accepted after September 6 and during the rest of the school year. These applications should be picked up from and returned to either the main Transportation office or the Austin Families office.

In the event that more employees register for the program by August 27 than there are spaces available, the following procedures will be used to select program participants and to determine the order of the waiting list(s):

(1) Applications submitted by bus drivers will be given the highest priority. If applications for more than 100 children are received from the drivers, a lottery will be held so that each driver will have an equal chance of being selected for the program. The waiting list will also be determined by the lottery.

(2) If applications for less than 100 children are received from bus drivers by August 27, applications from bus monitors will be used to fill the remaining spaces. If more applications are received from monitors than there are spaces remaining, a lottery will be used to select participants and to determine the order of the waiting list. In the case that bus drivers' children have filled all 100 spaces, a lottery will also be used to develop a separate waiting list for monitors.

(3) In the event that applications for less than 100 children are received from bus drivers and monitors by August 27, applications from other Transportation employees will be used to fill the remaining spaces. If more applications are received than there are spaces available, the same procedure as described in (2) above will be used to determine participation and/or the waiting list.

(4) If a lottery is to be held, the time and location will be posted at each terminal and the main Transportation office by August 30. The results of the lottery will be posted within two days after it is held in these same locations.

(5) Although the program is designed for approximately 50 pre-school children and 50 school-age children, if it appears that an excessive demand exists for one age group, slots may be transferred from one group to the other. This will be done at the discretion of Austin Families after August 27 or at the time that the lottery is held.

(6) Three separate waiting lists--for drivers, monitors, and other Transportation employees--will be maintained by Austin Families. If there are openings in the program, they will be filled first by names from the list of drivers, then from the list of monitors, and finally, from the list of other Transportation employees. After the initial lottery (if necessary), names will be added to each list in the order that the applications are received.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT AUSTIN FAMILIES INC. AT 454-4732.

Reprinted with permission of Austin Families, Inc.

AISD TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT CHILDCARE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Parent Agreement

By signing this agreement I am agreeing to participate in the childcare voucher program sponsored by the AISD Transportation Department and Austin Families Inc. I understand that there are a limited number of spaces available and that childcare assistance is not guaranteed. If my child(ren) is enrolled in the voucher program, the District will pay half (50%) of the monthly cost of any licensed or registered childcare that I choose (up to a specified maximum amount). This payment will be made by Austin Families Inc. directly to the childcare provider. I understand that I am responsible for paying my portion of the childcare cost to the childcare provider on time, according to the agreed upon policy of the provider.

I understand that current funding of this program is limited to the 1982-83 school year and that if I discontinue employment for the AISD Transportation Department or fail to comply with the program provisions, the childcare voucher assistance will be terminated.

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date

Statement of Responsibility for Quality of Care and Liability

I release AISD and Austin Families Inc. from responsibility for the quality of childcare services my child(ren) receives from the facility of my choosing. I understand that if I am displeased with the childcare for any reason I may contact Austin Families Inc. for additional referrals and make arrangements through them to transfer my child(ren) to other licensed or registered care.

I release AISD and Austin Families Inc. from any liability for any act of commision or omission on the part of the childcare facility and from any claims or losses resulting from any act or omission on my part or on the part of my child(ren).

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date

Evaluation Consent

I understand that I am participating in a demonstration project which will require my cooperation to evaluate the results. I agree to be interviewed and/or complete a written survey during my participation in the program or up to six months after participation. In addition, Austin Families Inc. shall have the right to examine attendance and safety records on file with the Transportation Department, so that they may assess the impact of the program. In order to ensure confidentiality, my name will not be used in any way.

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date

VOUCHER SUBSIDIZED DAY CARE

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

ATTENDANCE FORM

TO BE FILLED BY:

Participant Family

Provider

Period of Service

From: _____
Month Day Year

To: _____
Month Day Year

Child(ren)'s Name First Last	No.	WEEK 1 SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	WEEK 2 SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1														
	2														
	3														
	4														

Mark "P" = Present
"A" = Absent
"H" = Holiday
"V" = Vacation

NOTE: EVERY BOX MUST BE FILLED IN

SAMPLE

Preparer's Name: _____ _____
Parent or Guardian Date

OR

_____ _____
Day Care Provider Date

Reprinted with permission from the Hudson County Voucher Child Care Demonstration Project at New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services, Jersey City, New Jersey.

LEGAL PROCESS

FOR

SETTING UP A DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN

WHAT IS A DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN?

A Dependent Care Assistance Plan is a plan adopted by an employer to help meet an employee's child care costs. An employer can accrue all or part of these costs. A Dependent Care Assistance Plan can be set up as DIRECT ASSISTANCE, CAFETERIA BENEFITS, or SALARY REDUCTION. Recent revisions in the federal tax laws give tax incentives to employers who invest in child care.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

EMPLOYER'S

- The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 allows all expenses incurred by an employer to be deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.
- Improved Productivity
- Reduced Turnover and Absenteeism

EMPLOYEES

- The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 allows child care assistance to be viewed as a tax free benefit.
- Offsets the cost of reliable child care.
- Maximizes the employees' choices for child care alternatives such as infant program, pre-school age program, school-age program, and others.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

To qualify for the income tax deduction, the employer's Dependent Care Assistance Plan must meet the following requirements:

- The program must be a WRITTEN PLAN.
- The program must not discriminate in favor of employees who are officers, owners, or highly compensated. However, it can be set-up with restriction on income level so that only the most needy employees are served.
- Eligible employees must receive reasonable notification of the program.
- Employer must give annual report to employee of amounts paid by the employer.

Because of the necessary qualifying language it is advised that an employer work with an attorney. The legal expense is minimal, estimated at $200 or less.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Suzanne Clow
Phoenix Institute
352 Denver Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

532-6190

NOTE: THIS IS A SAMPLE PLAN. EMPLOYERS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ATTORNEYS OR ADVISORS WITH RESPECT TO ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

State of California

ABC CORPORATION
DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN*

1. Purpose.

ABC Corporation (the "Company") wishes to assist its employees in the care of their qualified dependents and therefore has adopted the ABC Corporation Dependent Care Assistance Plan (the "Plan") set out herein for the exclusive benefit of those employees who are eligible to participate in the Plan. The Plan is intended to qualify as a dependent care assistance program under Section 129 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (the "Code") and shall be construed to comply with Code Section 129.

2. Definitions.

The following terms are defined for purposes of the Plan and are indicated by capitalized initial letters wherever they appear in the Plan:

a. "Dependent" shall mean (i) any child of an Employee who is under age 15 or who is physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself and with respect to whom the Employee is entitled to claim an exemption for Federal income tax purposes or who is in the custody of the Employee for at least six months during the calendar year; and (ii) a spouse of the employee who is physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself.

b. "Employee" shall mean any person employed by the Company any portion of whose income is subject to withholding of income tax and/or for whom Social Security contributions are made by the Company, as well as any other person qualifying as a common law employee of the Company.

c. "Dependent Care Expenses" shall mean amounts paid for the care of a Dependent in the Employee's home or at a dependent care facility which meets all applicable requirements of state or local law or is exempt from such

---

* Additional plan provisions will apply and other considerations will pertain if the plan is an "employee welfare benefit plan" as defined in § 3(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended.

This sample plan is reprinted with permission of the authors.

requirements under the state or local law in question and amounts paid for related household services, except that the following items shall not be considered Dependent Care Expenses:

(i) Amounts paid to a person with respect to whom the employee or his or her spouse is entitled to claim an exemption for Federal income tax purposes;

(ii) Amounts paid to a child of the employee who is 18 years of age or younger; and

(iii) Amounts paid for or reimbursed under another plan of the Company or to which the Company contributed on behalf of the employee, under any Federal, state or local program of dependent care assistance, or by an employer of the spouse or by an educational institution where the spouse is an enrolled student.

3. Effective Date.

The Plan shall be effective on January 1, 1982.

4. Eligible Employees.

All employees of the Company shall be eligible to participate in the Plan.

5. Reimbursement of Expenses for Dependent Care.

a. Upon application of the Employee, accompanied by a bill, receipt, cancelled check, or other written evidence of payment or of the obligation to pay Dependent Care Expenses, the Company will reimburse the Employee for Dependent Care Expenses incurred in order to enable the Employee to be employed by the Company, subject to the limits of paragraph b. The Company reserves the right to verify all claimed expenses prior to reimbursement.

b. Limitation on Benefits. The maximum amount of Dependent Care Expenses which will be reimbursed under this Plan shall be the lowest of:

(i) $_____ per calendar year; or

(ii) If the Employee is single or is married and earns less than his or her spouse in a calendar year, the compensation paid to the Employee by the Company as reflected on his or her Form W-2 for the year; or

(iii) If the Employee is married and the earned income of his or her spouse is less than the compensation paid to the Employee by the Company in a calendar year, the earned income of the spouse. If the spouse is a student or is physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, the spouse will be deemed to have earned income (for each month that the spouse is a student or incapacitated) of $200 per month if the Employee has one Dependent for whom care is provided and of $400 per month if the Employee has two or more Dependents for whom care is provided.

The Company may require that the Employee and/or his or her spouse certify to the Company the amount of such spouse's expected earned income for the calendar year in question and may require that the Employee provide documentary evidence of the amount certified in the form of an employment contract, paycheck stub, medical records (if the spouse is incapacitated) or a school enrollment form (if the spouse is a student).

c. Direct Payment in Lieu of Reimbursement. The Company may, in its discretion, pay any Expenses for Dependent Care directly to the dependent care provider in lieu of reimbursing the Employee in satisfaction of its obligations under the Plan.

d. Limitation of Benefits Paid to Prohibited Group. No more that 25% of the benefits paid under the Plan in any one calendar year shall be provided for the class of individuals (or their spouses or dependents) each of whom owns more than 5% of the stock of the Company, determined in accordance with Code Sections 1563(d) and (e) without regard to Code Section 1563(e)(3)(C), on any one day of that calendar year. If the benefits payable under the Plan to such class exceeds the limits of this paragraph, the benefits paid to each individual member of the class shall be reduced proportionately.

6. Notification of Terms of Plan. A copy of the Plan shall be given to all Employees.

7. Statement of Benefits. On or before January 31 of each year, the Company shall furnish each Employee who received benefits under the Plan a written statement showing the amounts paid or the expenses incurred by the Employer in providing Dependent Care Assistance under the Plan for the prior calendar year.

8. Amendment or Termination. The Board of Directors of the Company may amend or terminate the Plan at any time; provided, however, that any such amendment or termination shall not affect any right to benefits arising prior to such amendment or termination or shall cause benefits paid hereunder not to qualify as dependent care assistance under Code Section 129.

9. Governing Law. This Plan and the rights of all persons under the Plan shall be construed in accordance with and under applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended and the laws of the State of California.

TO RECORD THE ADOPTION OF THE PLAN, the Company has caused this document to be executed by its duly authorized officer this ____ day of ____.

ABC CORPORATION

By_____
Its

STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

A. Costs Incurred by Employees.

Revenue and Taxation Code Section 17052.6 provides a credit comparable to Section 44A except that it is limited to 3% of the expenses and there is an income cap of $20,000.

B. Costs Incurred by Employers.

1. Revenue and Taxation Code Section 17202(a)(1) permits employers to deduct the cost of employer-provided child care. Child care is defined as programs designed to provide or facilitate the provisions of care and nurture for children under the age of 15 while their parents or guardians are working or in training.

2. Revenue and Taxation Code Section 17225.5 provides a special depreciation allowance for child development services established in convenient locations for eligible families who are employed, to be employed or enrolled in employment training programs. That section further provides that employers who establish facilities pursuant to the Education Code may compute depreciation deductions of such facilities under the straight line method using a useful life of 60 months.

3. Bank and Corporation Tax Law Section 24371.5 provides a similar depreciation deduction for employers establishing child care facilities.

4. California law has not been explicitly amended to provide that the cost of certain employer-provided child care assistance is not taxed to employee but Revenue and Taxation Code Section 17052.6 provides that employment related child care expenses are reduced by child care funded by his or her employer. This provision can be construed to imply that employer-provided child care is not taxed to the employee.

About the Authors

Barbara B. Creed is a partner at Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro, San Francisco, California. She specializes in deferred compensation and employee benefits, and is the President of the San Francisco Chapter of the Western Pension Conference. She has spoken at numerous programs and seminars on employee benefits topics and is the author of ERISA Compliance: Reporting and Disclosure (Practicing Law Institute, 1981).

Deene Goodlaw Solomon is of counsel at Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro, San Francisco, California. She also specializes in deferred compensation and employee benefits, and has written extensively in the field. She is currently a member of the President's Advisory Committee to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and is the co-author of Attorney's Guide to Pension and Profit Sharing Plans (California Continuing Education of the Bar, 1973).

The Salt Lake Tribune Lifestyle

Child-care vouchers aid employer and employee

Tuesday, July 3, 1984 Page B

By Dawn Tracy
Tribune Lifestyle Writer

A voucher system to help employees pay child-care costs is a simple, inexpensive and tax deductible way for employers to give workers a benefit.

Vouchers require no capital investment, there's no liability and the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 allows employers to deduct all costs as ordinary business expenses.

"When managers think of child care, they erroneously envision an on-site day-care center owned and operated by the company. Yet an on-site center is only one of many options that is available for firms to provide child-care benefits," said Karen Feldman, Business and Child Care Project director from Phoenix Institute, a nonprofit women's resource center.

Ms. Feldman said research has shown that child-care benefits improve productivity and reduce employee turnover and absenteeism.

For employees, child-assistance benefits are viewed by the federal government as tax-free pay increases — up to $2,400 for one dependent or $4,800 for two or more dependents.

Pay All or Part

With a voucher system, employers may pay for part or all of child-care costs. Employees choose the child-care provider and assume all liability. Types of care could be a licensed day-care center, an after-school program or a provider in a private home. Benefits may be direct assistance, cafeteria benefits or payroll deductions.

"To qualify for an income-tax deduction, companies must have a written plan that does not discriminate in favor of employees who are officers, owners or who are highly compensated," said Ms. Feldman. "However, voucher programs can be set up to serve only needy employees."

Ms. Feldman said eligible employees must be notified of the program, which can be as easy as posting a flier on a bulletin board or including a notice with regular paychecks. At the end of the year, employers must give workers a report of amounts paid by the company.

"Because of the necessary qualifying language, we advise employers to work with an attorney in setting up a program," said Ms. Feldman. "Legal expenses will probably be less than $200."

Costs of the program will be offset by increased employee productivity and less worker turnover and absenteeism, she said. One Salt Lake City manufacturing company estimated that it cost $2,000 to replace new employees. If only 10 percent of the turnover rate could be reduced, the business would save $120,000 per year.

It's Appreciated

"Employees appreciate child-care benefits," she said. "And workers will stay with a company that is sensitive to employee needs."

Even workers who do not have children appreciate such future benefits, said Ms. Feldman.

"If a problem comes up with a co-worker's child, everyone around the employee is affected," she said. "Workers whose children are grown generally don't mind child-care benefits because they are aware the ones who must cover for someone who has a problem at home."

A voucher system limits the employer's role to that of a broker, said Ms. Feldman. Responsibility for locating and working with the provider rests with the parent.

For employees who qualify, a company may provide a preset child-care allowance included in each paycheck or the business may issue coupons good for a specified amount to be redeemed by care providers.

Firms also have the option of setting up a sliding-fee benefit based on annual wage and family size. The most comprehensive programs are ones in which companies pay the full amount of child-care costs to the employee or directly to the provider.

Title Data, Inc., Denver, set up a voucher system to encourage employees to stay with the company, according to Jennie Herbert, administrative assistant at the data entry and keypunch firm. The company employs about 128 workers, 25 percent of whom receive the day-care benefit.

Ms. Herbert said the voucher sys-

VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR CHILD CARE

Ways a business can set up child-care voucher benefits:

- A preset allowance is included in paychecks
- Company issues coupons to be redeemed by provider
- Reimbursement is determined by sliding-fee scale
- Company pays full amount of child-care cost

-source: Phoenix Institute, SLC

tem is "an easy program to administer."

Under the voucher program at Title Data, employees submit receipts showing amount paid, dates and names of the children. The company, in turn, reimburses employees for half of their child-care costs which average about $1,100 per year for workers who receive the benefit.

Other companies that have voucher programs are Palm Harbor General Hospital, Garden Grove, Calif.; Burger King, Hartford, Conn.; Children's Hospital, St. Paul, Minn.; Ford Foundation, New York; and Palmetto Hospital, Hialeah, Fla.

Besides voucher systems, companies may sponsor other child-care programs that can be inexpensive or comprehensive. The resource and referral program can be as simple as providing a phone number for employers to call for names and addresses of providers.

Easy As Dialing

In Salt Lake City, the Child Care Connection, sponsored by the Junior League of Salt Lake City, Inc., provides free computerized names of licensed child-care providers — something about which local employers should tell their workers.

"Getting information about local licensed providers is as easy as dialing your phone," said Ms. Feldman. "Parents, of course, are responsible for seeing that the care is adequate."

Volunteers at Child Care Connection answer calls Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Tuesday evenings, 7 to 9 p.m.

Other employer-sponsored child-care programs are employer-reserved slots in which a company reserves space in a child-care facility for use by its employees. Also, firms can operate a child-care center or help neighborhood families become licensed child-care providers.

Ms. Feldman said Phoenix Institute will provide information to help companies set up a child-care benefit program.

When day care comes to work, parents and tots profit

By Kathy Foley
Deseret News staff writer

When Becky Dudley drops off her daughter Amber at her day-care center it's all smiles as the two say good-bye, not at all like the tearful partings of a few months ago.

"She used to cry every time I dropped her off at her old day-care center," Mrs. Dudley said. "I even had to quit for a few weeks because I couldn't take it anymore."

Partings are smoother now because 3½-year-old Amber knows Mom is just down the hall. While Mom greets clients and answers the telephone at Convent Associates Inc., Amber delights a record of modeling clay or paints and glues some wonderful works of art.

Mrs. Dudley and her 46 co-workers at the design firm on South Temple are enjoying one of the latest in employee benefits — a day-care center located right in the office.

Ron and W. Lee Convent began planning for their center at the beginning of the year. They opened one of Utah's first office day-care center to eight children on July 11, and after two weeks pronounced it a success. Friday, the Convents proudly hosted state and local government officials, business executives and the media to visit.

The Convents first had the idea for opening a facility at the office a few years ago when Mrs. Convent took her youngest child to work with her.

"Too many mother and father can afford to stay at home to raise their children," she said.

Convent Associates' day-care center is free for employees' children. The company picks up the tab, one of the costs of ensuring it will keep its good employees, the Convents say. Although not all employees take advantage of the benefit, the Convents say they have found no resentment among those who don't have children to use the service.

"One of the biggest concerns young have is still on his ground when they have children and are ready to use it," said Dawn Bowman, the child-care center's director.

As befits a design firm, Convent Associates has provided the children, ages 3 months to 6 years, with a gorgeous, sun-filled room bursting with colors on the walls, furniture and toys. The children love going, most parents said.

"When we were closed down for vacation, the kids really missed it," said Dawn Christensen, who works in the accounting department and uses the facility twice a week.

Christensen, who has a one-hour commute to work, said having the facility at the office gives her more flexibility to spend time with her children.

The center provides lunch for the children, and the two full-time employees who run the center frequently take them by Utah Transit Authority bus to the zoo, parks and library.

Parents frequently stop in for a peek at their children, and the children, creeping out to the park, will wave as they pass Mom or Dad's desk. However, Ms. Bowman said she has not had any problems with parents interfering with their children's care or children bothering parents.

Day care is no scare for children whose parents work at Convent Associates, a Salt Lake design firm with on-site child care.

Eventually the company hopes to provide a sick room for children at the day-care center. Until then, the company sends a nurse to the employee's home to take care of a sick child, whether enrolled in the company's day-care center or not.

If the child is well, but Mom or Dad is sick, the child may come to the day-care center while the parent rests quietly at home.

Karen Feldman, who runs the Phoenix Institute's Business and Child Care Project, helped Convent set up the center.

Let your fingers do the walking:

Finding child care by computer

It's finally here! The Child Care Connection provides a one stop resource to all the available child care in the valley.

by Patty Kimball

Six weeks ago, Dorothy F., a secretary and a single mother of three (ages 10, 4 and 1), faced what working mothers dread most. Her babysitter, a woman much appreciated by Dorothy and loved by her children, announced that she was not going to be sitting anymore. "She said she needed to earn more money," says Dorothy, "and I didn't know what I was going to do."

Lorraine C., also a secretary, had a similar problem. Up until a month ago, she had relied on relatives to take care of her 21-month-old child, but that situation had changed and her sitter too was about to be unavailable. Lorraine needed someone else, fast.

And there's Ty P., a disabled father, who shares looking after his 4-year-old son with the boy's grandma while Ty's wife works. Ty was looking for some kind of group program or preschool for his son. For them, money is a definite problem.

Dorothy, Lorraine and Ty all called Child Care Connection, a child care resource and referral service that has recently opened in Salt Lake City. Billed as the "who, what, where, and how much of child care in the Salt Lake Valley," Child Care Connection helped these parents, and many others find the type of child care they want and can afford. The service is free both to parents looking for child care and for child care providers who wish to be referred.

"We have mailed roughly 800 questionnaires to licensed child care providers in the Salt Lake area," says Karen Hyde, co-director of the program. "When the providers return the questionnaires to us, we enter the information into our computer and then are able to call it up as requested." Information from the questionnaires includes the child care provider's location, hours, rates, size, type of child care (child care center, family child care home, preschool, or kindergarten) and special services offered such as handicapped,

A Junior League project, the Child Care Connection is completely supported by volunteers. Sherry Stuart works with the data that has been filled on the computer.

gifted or sick care, meals and snacks, and transportation to and from home or school.

"It's great!" says Dorothy. "I called and they whipped out a bunch of names within my work area and near where I live." For Dorothy, who needs full-time care for two children, it was important to find a child care provider who offered a discount for more than one child per family. "Child Care Connection was able to give me the names of those who give discounts. I checked a few out and found a really good one."

The resource and referral service is unique in this country in that it uses the latest computer technology to track its referrals. "We were advised by others who have done this sort of thing elsewhere that we ought to start with a purely manual system," says co-director Hyde. "But it seemed foolish to turn our backs on the technology available at a very reasonable cost. Sure, there are some bugs to be worked out, but nothing insurmountable. Basically, the computer works very well." And she adds, "Our volunteers and I have appreciated the opportunity to become 'computer literate'."

Volunteers are the key. Child Care Connection was initiated by the Junior League of Salt Lake, a volunteer service organization which wanted to help working parents, particularly women, for whom adequate child care is often a barrier to career advancement or even self-

"We hope by making it easier to find child care, we will not only make life less stressful for working mothers, but we'll also attract more high quality providers into the system."

Karen Hyde, co-director of Child Care Connections. Accurate, up-to-date information about child care for those who want the best for their children.

sufficiency. Junior League members set up the office and gathered the information. They now staff the phones and run the computer. Funding is also via the Junior League. Says co-director Hyde, herself a Junior League volunteer, "We hope by making it easier to find child care, we will not only make life less stressful for working mothers, but we'll also attract more high-quality providers into the system."

Hyde is quick to point out that Child Care Connection by no means endorses the providers they refer. "Our only requirement is that the provider be licensed, meaning that she or he has met certain minimum standards set out by the state of Utah. It is up to the parent to take the time to check out these people and decide for themselves whether they will meet their needs." Adds Hyde, "For those who are unsure how to evaluate child care, we can offer some basic guidelines."

Besides helping parents find child care, another thrust of the project is to encourage employers to begin helping employees with their child care needs. "This doesn't have to mean an on-site child care center," says Suzanne Clow, a child care specialist at the Phoenix Institute and the person who directs this aspect of Child Care Connection. "There are other options: reserved slots, voucher systems or resource and referral systems such as the Child Care Connection."

"Studies show that productivity, absenteeism and turnover are all significantly affected by an employee's child care situation," says Clow. "It's just good business for an employer to help

To date, Child Care Connection has four large Utah employers interested in working with them and Clow predicts many more will want to be involved in the near future.

Child Care Connection is located at 352 South Denver Street (440 East), Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. It is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. The phone number is 537-1044.

Child Care Connection is located at 352 South Denver Street (440 East), Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. It is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. The telephone number is 537-1044.

Patty Kimball is the co-editor of Family Connections *and co-director of the Child Care Connection.*